

Q (4):

EP-309756 A knowledge system (10) to answer a specific request from a requester, each request having a record including a plurality of parameters, taken from a given family of parameters, and a value for each of said plurality of parameters, the knowledge system (10) including an expert system (12) to process the record of the specific request to provide an answer to the request, comprising: a complementary database (14) storing a plurality of records of requests having known answers, all of the value for each one of the parameters of the records stored in the complementary database forming a value set associated with said one parameter; searching means (16) to search said complementary database for a record identical to the record of the specific request, and if an identical record is found, to provide to the requester the known answer to the request having said identical record, said search means including means to search all of the value sets associated with the parameters of the record of the specific request, one value set at a time, for all of the values in each value set identical to the value of the associated parameter of the specific request; input means (18) to receive from the requester the record of the specific request, and to transmit the record thereof to said search means; and output means (20) to transmit and indicate the answer to the request to the requester, if an answer is found from said search in the complementary database; means ((22) to invoke the expert system (12) to process the record of the specific request only when no record identical to the record of the specific request is found in the complementary data base (14)